

# THE QUIVER

Saturday, November 16, 1867.



(Drawn by R. NEWCOMBE.)

"Look up," said his wife.—p. 130.

## WRONG ON BOTH SIDES.

BY JOHN G. WATTS, AUTHOR OF "PICTURES OF ENGLISH LIFE," "TALES AND SONGS," ETC.

### CHAPTER I.

"DEAD!" exclaimed Robert Hartwell, with anguish depicted in the most terrible characters upon his youthful face, as he sprang into his father's bed-chamber.

"Dead! dead!" echoed his mother, a lady barely of mid-life, but on whom care had prematurely imprinted many a sign and mark of age.

"Dead! dead!" sobbed his sister, tenderly

kissing the yet warm cheek, that never more on earth should turn lovingly to hers.

"Oh, poor, poor father!" groaned the young man, following his sister in the sad embrace.

A hush now fell upon all, so far as words were concerned; but the three mingled their tears and ill-suppressed sobs, in the saddest, truest union. A gentle tap came at the door; Robert, who could scarcely have been nineteen, opened it. The servant handed him a letter. As he caught sight of the superscription, a change passed across his face, a reproachful curl stole to his lip, and he cast the missive aside.

"Cruel, cruel, man!" he murmured: "by the smallest reach of generosity from you, our beloved father had been spared to us."

"Hush, Robert!" interposed the newly-made widow. "God's will be done."

An hour afterwards, that letter was returning to its sender, unopened, and no intimation accompanying it, of what had so recently happened.

That the reader may understand why, at such a moment, Robert Hartwell could evince feelings to draw down the rebuke of his mother, it will be necessary to give a little of the family's former history.

Robert Hartwell, Senior, had, till within a couple of years of his decease, been exceedingly well to do. Combining the business of ironmonger with that of saddler, he had gradually accumulated a considerable sum of money, and was looked upon as one of the most prosperous tradesman in the town of which he was a denizen, and which, by the way, was one of the largest in the West of England.

One day a fox-hunting gentleman-farmer, who was a good customer, came to him with a plausible story, and succeeded in borrowing a large sum of money on his own personal security. When the hour for repayment arrived, the cash was not forthcoming, and soon afterwards he suddenly collapsed. Everything was mortgaged so deeply that he could not meet the interest. As a consequence, ruin had ensued. Within a week the wretched creature was found dead in a copse near his abode, and a discharged pistol in his hand told the terrible story of self-murder. The blast which overthrew his house, brought misery about the ears of the man who had befriended him. The latter being strictly honourable, gave up all he possessed, paid his creditors fourteen shillings in the pound, and began business afresh, hoping at no distant date to be able to hand them over the remainder.

Somehow, his honesty did not produce the effect it should have done, and he found great difficulty in getting his credit renewed, even in the feeblest degree. Mrs. Hartwell's unmarried brother, a wealthy farmer in Kent, was appealed to; but he

was found very slow to respond. Though far from ungenerous as a youth, maturity had brought a change over him. He had grown to like money for its own sake.

It is by no means a difficult thing to save, provided we can blind our eyes to the calls of duty and the claims of humanity. Success had been poison to this man's better nature; he was too much inclined to attribute want of success in others to want of care. "Look at me!" was too frequently upon his lips, quite ignoring the source from whom all blessings flow. No wonder, then, when appealed to for the loan of a few hundreds, until confidence and credit should once more smile upon the late insolvent, that his reply was anything but comforting.

For some time he steadily refused to advance a single penny. "My advice," he wrote, "is, leave the town in which you have made such a terrible blunder, go to some place where you are not known, and begin business again in a smaller way. Doubtless, by care and industry, the lost ground may yet be recovered."

In return, it was urged that, with such a well-established business in their hands, to run away were suicidal.

After a great deal of begging, the Kentish farmer was induced to advance a hundred pounds. The money was soon exhausted in the purchase of materials and wares, and long before the yearly bills could be sent out, the Hartwells were sorely aground again. All kinds of shifts were made with a view to tiding over the evil day. Bessie went out and taught French and music, while Robert obtained a situation in a lawyer's office, whereby he earned a few shillings a week. He had only just completed his education, which had been conducted with an idea to his going into the medical profession. All was unavailing, materials and goods grew scant, and if anybody did trust the struggling man a trifle, inferior articles were supplied at high prices. As a consequence, customers began to complain and trade to desert his counter. Appeals were again made to John Giles, Mrs. Hartwell's brother, but to little purpose. In reply, he hinted his belief that Mr. Hartwell was fonder of his glass than was good for his till. The poor fellow, who never entered a tavern, and did not take a glass of ale in a month, bowed his head and shed tears.

"Never mind, dear; look up," said his wife, laying her hand gently on his shoulder.

"I should be sorely off now, Patty, if I could not look up," returned the afflicted man, "up to that One who tempereth the wind to the shorn lamb."

A few weeks afterwards, with love and forgiveness upon his lips, he sank into the embrace of death.

CHAPTER II.

A DAY or two after the funeral, Mrs. Hartwell took counsel with her children upon what had better be done for their future living. The result was, a resolution to quit the town in which they had known so much misfortune, and go up to London. In that Babylon they would be able to shift and struggle, unknown and free of prying eyes. After selling off the greater portion of the furniture, and calling in a few outstanding accounts, they started for the metropolis.

Obtaining a suite of apartments in the neighbourhood of Islington, the little furniture they had brought up was set out to the best advantage, and an announcement was made by means of a brass plate, that the educational opportunities of the neighbourhood had been increased: "Establishment for Young Ladies" were the exact words.

Robert was not less ready than his mother and sister, for the morning that witnessed the affixing of the plate, saw him set out in search of employment. Not liking law work, he determined on making application among the merchants and larger traders. He was surprised that everybody he addressed could tell he was just up from the country, and discomfited to find himself rebuffed on every hand. When he reached home that afternoon, his mother and sister were ready to meet him, and full of anxious, tender inquiries; and, though he put the best face upon his day's adventures, yet for all that, they could see he was disappointed; therefore both strove to cheer him as best they might. The next day, and the next, brought no better fortune to him, nor did the academy prosper at anything like the rate its proprietors had expected.

Strung to increased exertion, Robert trod in all quarters to obtain employ, including even attorneys' offices. As the little stock of money swiftly melted away, his anxiety grew more intense. From applying for a clerk's place, he got to asking for a situation as warehouseman; and at last, so desperate became affairs, that he was glad to offer himself as a porter. Now they began to fall behind in their rent, and in a little while were politely requested to suit themselves elsewhere. Suiting themselves was not the most difficult task: it was suiting other people that gave them trouble. Few liked the idea of a school being kept on their premises; and, more than that, the applicants wore unmistakable marks of broken-down respectability.

At last, after much difficulty, they were admitted into a small house, which had been tenantless many months. There were evidences of damp about its walls, and other appearances not calculated to attract; but the unfortunate family were really glad of any shelter. No sooner did they begin to light fires for the purpose of drying the

rooms, than they found, to their horror, the damp increase. Perspirations broke out on every bit of plaster, and unpleasant odours found their way into every apartment. The chimneys all smoked—that is, they did not smoke half enough, but seemed to delight in ejecting into the rooms that which they were constructed to carry over the roof. Once more the plate announcing the "Establishment for Young Ladies" was displayed. It seemed such a satire upon the neighbourhood, that it was hardly to be wondered nobody came to inquire terms. Finally, and as a last resource, the two women were compelled to seek needlework at a slop-shop hard by. Colds and coughs, as the winter closed in, became the common lot, and yet they dare not complain, for already they were behind again with their rent. Bessie kept up her spirits, or appeared to do so, even when both Robert and her mother were inclined to despond. One by one, every little article that could be at all dispensed with, was carried to the broker's and sold, and Robert was fretting and starving himself into mere a shadow.

Things had arrived at this terrible pass when, one evening, he returned with a smile on his face and tears in his eyes. He had obtained temporary employment, and it might lead to something better. His clothes by this had grown very, very worn, but to-day they bore marks about them—let us not call such *stains*, for the soiling of honest labour are as much decorations of honour as are the strife-rents in a warrior's banner—which they had never known before.

"Thank God!" exclaimed Mrs. Hartwell, devoutly; and both she and Bessie caught him in a hearty embrace. They always gave him a hearty embrace when he came home, but if they were a little more demonstrative this particular evening, it was not from any selfish motive, but from pure rejoicing at the gladness he evidently felt; and at the peace which they knew his anxious heart must experience at the fact of having his prospects of helping *them* increased.

"Now, I trust," said the gentle Bessie, pushing him into a chair by the fire, "we shall hear no more about your living upon us, you naughty boy."

"Oh, no," he replied, gleefully. Then placing one shilling and ninepence on the table, "There! that's my day's wage!"

"And where and how did you earn it, Bob?" asked the girl, pouring out a cup of tea from the pot, which had been kept for him on the hob, and handing him some bread without any butter.

"I'll tell you in a moment."

"Oh, you can eat and talk too, though it is ill mannered. I don't want you to leave off eating, for you must want something, after all that hard work; but I'm so anxious to know everything, I cannot stop till you've done your tea."

"Well, then," said he, "I've been employed to-day at a wharf in Tooley Street, near London Bridge; I've been helping to remove parcels of goods from one warehouse to another."

Had he told the whole facts of the case, he would have said that, for the sum of threepence an hour, he had been carrying burdens under which he could hardly stagger, rolling ragged hogsheads that scratched and tore his unused hands; and that he had been the fellow-labourer of some of the rudest and roughest to be found on the south side of London.

In the morning he was away before breakfast, and so on every day to the end of the week, by which time he had earned twelve shillings. Furthermore, he had been ordered to be at the wharf by eight o'clock on the following Monday. In a week or two, Robert's superior manner—already he had got nick-named the "Swell Porter"—attracted the notice of one of the foremen, and in the end he was taken into regular employment at a salary of fifteen shillings a week. His mother and sister also began to prosper somewhat. They had found work at a large West-end baby-linen establishment. Mrs. Hartwell and her daughter could now earn four times as much in a day as

formerly, and without working so long by three hours.

The wretched house wherein they had been existing, combined with the meagre diet they had so long been compelled to make shift with, had by this begun to tell upon the health of all three. Robert, by denying himself everything he possibly could do without, had greatly assisted in the reduction of their debt of rent. At length the last farthing was paid up, and at once they set about seeking more healthy accommodation. The deadly exhalations amid which they had so long been living, had done their work too surely, for while they were actually in treaty for lodgings, typhus smote mother and son in one hour. Bessie, in her distress, did all that she could—fetched a doctor, who, seeing how affairs stood, advised the instant removal of both patients to the Fever Hospital, and herself to another abode. The poor girl at first pleaded hard not to be separated from those who were so dear to her, but, when the medical man informed her that nothing but the hospital could possibly save them, then she dried up her tears, and set zealously about promoting their departure.

*(To be concluded in our next.)*

## PAIN.

**B**ESIDES the business, the pleasure, and the rest, which seem to share life between them, how large a portion of its time and strength is given to that universal claimant, pain—pain of body or of mind; suffering, whether from disease or accident, or remorse, or fear, or satiety. Pain, in some form or another, is inevitable; but it is more than inevitable, it is advantageous; it is more than advantageous, it is necessary: and the question is, not merely how we may suffer least, but how we may profit most.

If we analyse our own individual experience, we shall find the strange fact, that it is not by shrinking from every possibility or appearance of pain that we can in reality and ultimately encounter least; not by a natural flying from it in every case, as from something unnatural, but by a voluntary endurance, and even search for it in not a few instances, by a utilising, and, so to speak, a culture of it in many. The unforced payment of a small tribute to this universal king, not only bribes him from further extortion, but often buys from him an almost total immunity. But it must be done in a reasonable time and manner. He must be met half way, and propitiated with early offerings. "It is good for a man that he bears the yoke in his youth." If we seek the reason for this state of things, we merely peer vainly into

darkness that hides the origin of all things; we are asking idle questions of God himself. It is worse than folly to trouble ourselves as to that which is inevitably hidden, and which, probably, we are incapable of perceiving, even if it should present itself before us.

To make good our theory as to pain anticipated and cultured, we have but to call to mind the pains of self-denial, of active benevolence, of martyrdom; the pains of curative and preservative measures for health of body and mind; the pains of toil and hardship for the bread we eat, the knowledge, the art, the society we enjoy. This pain or sorrow is not to be found equally distributed in the acquisition or possession of these good things. Like health, and wealth, and happiness, it has no dead level amongst men, or even for the man; but yet the black thread is to be seen constantly, here and there and everywhere, in the warp and woof of the wonderful texture of life. However vulgar and petty in some of its lowest details, it is a strange and awful fact that this giant of wrong, of sin, of pain, broods over all our beautiful earth, and has even cast his shadow on the heavens and slain the Son of God himself. Strange and awful, but we must even face it to the end, till at last we rise and leave it in the dust of forgetfulness and death.

Shakespeare tells us, "Sweet are the uses of



adversity;" and, although there are ills in which we cannot see anything that is not bitter, his words convey a great truth. We learn, or we might learn, from this sad teacher to be patient; to be strong; to bear with our fellows in our common disease; to put our trust and hope in something above the calamities of the world; to find a footing for our interests and affections in that which is not weak and slippery like the common ways of life. All this has been written for us, and preached to us, over and over again. The beauty of self-denial, too, for the sake of others, is apparent in all history, and most apparent in the greatest of all histories. But we do not so readily perceive that there is a self-denial which is necessary for our own sakes, and that there are pains and troubles and dangers which we should anticipate, in order best to grapple with them. A man may have a limb so injured or diseased, that his future safety or happiness can be found only in its sacrifice. This involves present inconvenience, pain, danger; but he does not hesitate. So it is with many of the ordinary concerns of life, and so it is pre-eminently with our higher hopes and possibilities. Life, in this light, is one grand self-sacrifice; not the sacrifice of blood to make atonement; not the apparent sacrifice of a man who gives up something good that he may thereby buy something better; but the sacrifice of a man who puts away with pain something—whether it be a possession, or a sentiment, or an indulgence, or an affection—which stands in the path to something the superior grandeur or truth of which invites him further forward.

What is that which we have been told?—"It is better to enter into life halt or maimed, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into everlasting fire." And again: "Whosoever will save his life shall lose it; and whosoever will lose his life for my sake, shall find it." And do we not hear elsewhere, in the same Divine language, that we must pass through pain here, which is no means of purgatory, nor of propitiation, but is, nevertheless, the necessary medium of perfection? Even to that broken perfection which is to be found now and then in our experience here, there is no path which is not shadowed more or less with sorrow. The spirit must be sublimed in a fiery crucible; the metal beaten out with hot and cruel strokes. It is hard to speak of this matter—the most practical in the world—except in figurative language, because it comes to us in such diverse and sometimes subtle details,—it spreads itself so broadly over life, and pervades it with such a mysterious power, that we cannot represent it in its entirety, except by an illustration. But there is one general and marked result which we may easily describe as following pain and sorrow, that is, the breaking up of the ordinary

routine of pleasure and desire by something which is connected with error and infirmity, and even death, and should therefore call these to mind, if they have been long unthought of. Whatever we suffer, from the pang of toothache to the loss of the dearest friend, is significant of the decay and the incompleteness of all which now surrounds us. Whether our pain be the result of our folly or our misfortune, we alike learn that man is not intended to attain here to the most perfect happiness, and that he must look for the gratification of his better hopes and capacities to something beyond death. Still more, there is a *rational* self-denial which lives in the spirit of such an expectation, such a faith; and the pains which it inflicts are often scarcely felt in the intensity of that spirit. And as the practice of this self-denial grows into a habit; as men, in the contest between principle and passion, learn constantly to mortify the one that the other may live, so their reward, however far, becomes nearer, more tangible, and even present, and the pain itself becomes less.

But there is a self-denial which is *irrational*—a fanatic asceticism, or self-torture of some kind or other—which we must carefully distinguish from the other. Indeed, there is scarcely a false religion on the earth which does not prescribe its purgatory for its devotees: not saying, Strive after such a virtue, and give up such a vice, no matter what pain it may cost; but, For such a sin, submit to such a penalty, that it may be washed from the list that stands against your soul—for such a pardon give so many pounds sterling, so many drops of blood, so many repetitions of a prayer, so many years of moral and mental and physical suicide. Such credulity may be dying out now, but it has numbered its victims by millions.

The liability to pain is a gift to us for the preservation of both mind and body—a sentinel who stands on guard over us when we are ignorant or careless of danger. He rarely betrays his post; but there are occasions when his warnings must be disregarded. The happiest man is not he who has experienced the least pain, but he whose pain and pleasure alike have produced the happiest results. Opposed as these two are, they combine to form in him a unity of purpose and action. In the light of the faith of Christ, they are not two wild principles let loose upon the earth to drive men at their pleasure, but guides which, if truly followed, will lead towards the right path. They can, indeed, when alone, teach man but little of the truth which it is expedient that he should know; but, within certain limits, they are just safeguards from error. Pleasure, indeed, is fearfully abused amongst men; but the avenging pain is sure to follow, not so much in anger, after all, as in mercy. Pain is thus the faithful lieutenant of

God upon earth, and ceases not to perform its office till the last moment of existence has closed the door upon repentance for ever. It is one of the most difficult, as well as the most important, functions of faith to recognise in its proper sphere this great agency of pain; to see it as the minister of God upon earth, and to receive it as such—awful as it sometimes seems, and red-handed with the murder of the innocents. And the light of faith is, after all, the only light in which we can look on it with any hope and comfort. No sug-

gestion of philosophy has ever resolved to man's satisfaction the mystery of this world's troubles; no precept of philosophy, however truly followed, has armed us completely for the encounter. As science can trace from the wound the path of the messenger of pain, but stays upon the threshold of the sentient spirit itself, so it can follow a system and a Providence through the dark and the winding ways of the world's history, but must pause before that sacred source which is enshrined in eternal mystery. J. S. W.

### OUR SOCIAL BEES; OR, WILLING WORKERS.

BY THE REV. J. HILES HITCHENS, F.R.S.L.



EMOCRITUS is reported to have said, "More are made good by exertion than by nature." The famous Greek was right. We have heard of rare geniuses that could be profound in judgment without reflection, exact in figures without calculation, elegant in composition without practice, and eloquent in speech without preparation. But we have been fortunate enough to meet with only one who professed such extraordinary powers; and that *rara avis* was very short-lived. Being weak in the wings, from want of practice, he soon fell a prey to the bold, strong, but lawful competition of aspiring industry. Being irritable in difficulty, and impatient for honour, his ten talents were trammelled. Patient persistence has thus often achieved what genius has never essayed; and the earnest worker has retained his well-won place, in the front rank of earth's worthies, long after they who, by a single stride, rose to honour, have ingloriously sunk into oblivion.

"The lamp of genius, though by Nature lit,  
If not protected, pruned, and fed with care,  
Soon dies, or runs to waste with fitful glare."

This has been recognised by all the gifted men of past days, who succeeded in stamping their character on their own and subsequent generations. "There never was an eminent who was not an industrious man," said Cotton Mather. Dip into the biographies of our great men, and you shall find them, like working bees, with a concentrated purpose seeking the well-being of the colony to which they belong. However conscious of the fertility of their genius, they recognised the necessity of cultivation. However muscular their minds, they could not dispense with the gymnasium. The golden key which opened to them the stores of honour, wealth, or wisdom was *work*. A celebrated painter once produced a very powerful, though not finished, picture in three days. He asked 100 sequins. The gentleman for whom the artist had executed the work, objected to the sum

as being excessive for the work of but three days. "What!" exclaimed the vexed artist, "do you forget that I have been thirty years learning how to make this picture in three days?" We know a London physician who, after receiving his patients during the appointed hours of call, can demand, and does constantly obtain, thirty guineas for a visit of not so many minutes.

But this facility of execution, and fulness of reward are, with very few exceptions, the fruit only of antecedent toil. The men were training for years who by a *coup de main* have carried off the laurels. Their conquests of an hour have resulted from a lifetime of lonely, patient, unremitting exertion. Sir Joshua Reynolds truly said, "Excellency is not bestowed on man, but as the reward of labour." Look, for example, at Demosthenes, retiring to his subterranean study, copying Thucydides' history eight times to catch the style, and practising speaking with pebbles in his mouth to cure his stammering. Look at Seneca, plodding at his work so that he wrote to a friend and declared, that not a day was allowed to pass without his writing something, or reading and epitomising some good author. Luther preached almost daily, was continually engaged in controversy, carried on a most extensive correspondence, and yet, to the surprise of all Europe, published, among other books, a very fair translation of the Scriptures. Erasmus was "ever on the wing," and yet, by the cautious employment of his time, produced fully a dozen folio volumes of great learning. Milton from boyhood was fond of studious retirement. He seldom quitted his work before the midnight hour; to which late study, doubtless, may be mainly attributed his blindness. Wesley travelled about 5,000 miles in a year, preached on an average three times a day, and wrote tracts and books to the number of two hundred. Sir Matthew Hale, for many years, spent sixteen hours each day in hard study of the law; which, for mental rest,

would be varied now and then by mathematics or philosophy. David Hume sat at his desk thirteen hours a day. The distinguished statesman, Charles James Fox, attributed his wonderful success as an orator to his determination to speak once every night during each session of Parliament. The Rev. Charles Simeon, whose published sermons number 2,536, and form twenty-one volumes, was known to recompose the plan of one sermon thirty times; and some of his discourses occupied several days in composition. One of the greatest living preachers was known, in his prime, to spend eight hours each day for four days on one sermon; and a late principal of a Nonconformist college used to advise his students, when starting in ministerial life, to write each sermon carefully six times before preaching it.

These are but a few instances out of many which serve to show that, in literature, art, science, and commerce, it has been by prolonged and patient effort—not by a sudden, startling leap—that the great men of the past and present have taken their permanent positions of influence. Each has been able to say with Wesley, "Leisure and I have long taken leave of each other," and all have found *work* the sure path to reward.

But apart from the valuable additions we may make to our social hive—apart from the honour, the influence, the wealth we may acquire as compensation, it should be remembered that *work itself* is a blessing; that the best wages are *in* the working. Toil educates the faculties. As physical labour develops the muscles, strengthens the respiratory organs, promotes digestion, and thus confirms the constitution; so mental effort accords grasp to the judgment, tenacity to the memory, and tone to the affections. Nature is industrious. All things around us retain their health by action. The earth is ever changing its aspects; the air is ceaselessly in motion; the sea is restless—nothing is idle.

"Is not the field, with lively culture green,  
A sight more joyous than the dead morass?  
Do not the skies, with active ether clean,  
And fann'd by sprightly zephyrs, far surpass  
The foul November fogs, and slumb'rous mass,  
With which sad Nature veils her drooping face?  
Does not the mountain stream, as clear as glass,  
Gay-dancing on, the putrid pool disgrace?  
The same in all holds true, but chief in human race."

Why then should man dream of physical or mental health without industry? Labour is the indispensable condition of preserving a sound mind in a sound body. They are pitiable weaklings who yield to sloth. Counteracting the beneficent law of labour, they become strangers to buoyant health, peaceful relaxation, and refreshing sleep; ay, they pauperise themselves, and

defeat the grand object of their creation. The Marquis of Spinola once asked Sir Horace Vere, "of what his brother died?" Sir Horace replied—"He died, sir, of having nothing to do." "Alas!" said Spinola, "that is enough to kill any general of us all." We wonder not that Dr. Adam Clarke should say, "The old proverb about having too many irons in the fire is an abominable lie. Have all in—shovel, tongs, and poker!"

One thing is quite certain, that the surest way to be happy is to be employed. There is a Spanish proverb—"The hound that is chasing the game does not feel the fleas;" and the Turks say, "A busy man is troubled with but one devil, but the idle man with a thousand." We have observed often, that when children, growing tired of their playing, become troublesome, if the parent set each child some trifling task, the little folks are happy. There is no doubt that nine-tenths of the sorrows of life proceed from idleness. Inactivity gives birth to evil thoughts, unwholesome comparisons, murmurings, fears, despondings. No man need be slothful from the want of occupation. The Good Master of the vineyard has given "to every man his work." He never designed that one son of Adam should be a mere supine spectator of the deeds of his fellows, but assigned a special service to each, and will expect ultimately an ingenuous account from all. Neither need any man look far for his sphere of toil. It lies before him. In the circle in which he moves, however limited, he will find enough to occupy his earnest, solemn, anxious thought. In addition to his lawful worldly engagements, he has self to conquer; a carnal heart to crucify; evil passions, lurking in the recesses of the soul, to subdue; habits, which indulgence has fostered into a second nature, to break off; and sins to be rooted out, which infest the life with the tenacity of weeds which shoot their knotted fibres beneath the surface of the garden. Then there are the young whom he may instruct, the poor whom he may aid, the suffering whom he may comfort; there is the Church to help in its militant struggles with darkness, and his generation to serve. The claims of humanity are too pressing, and the wants of the world too great, to allow any man to be idle. From all parts of the earth we are summoned to action; and happy is that man who, with prompt and unreserved consecration, yields his faculties to the work of the Lord.

All ministers of the Gospel have found indolence one of the most fertile causes of spiritual depression among professing Christians. For your own sake, therefore, reader, as well as for the world's sake, and the Church's sake, bestir your energies, be a worker and not a drone!

## SECOND LOVE.

**S**AY good-bye here, for our paths are twain,  
And let us part while we can in love;  
Fear not for me. I have borne the pain,  
Yes, once already! but not again,  
I will hope no bliss but a bliss above.

There was something once :—when the stars come out,  
When I look at the quiet moon alone,  
'Tis only then I dare think about—  
Ah me! but my spirit's joyous shout  
Faded away in a mournful moan.

The Spring came dancing over the plain,  
The birds sang out in their careless mirth,  
The sunshine brightened to mock my pain,  
For I never could be a boy again,—  
Could not be young any more on earth!

Have you ever trodden a path alone,  
That you never trod alone before?  
Ah me! how gloomy all things had grown,  
And yet I talked in my former tone,  
And tried to smile with the smile of yore

Yet what was changed did not pain me so,  
As what mid changes remained the same,  
The laughter that wrings out the heart of woe,  
The same old lights in the sunset glow,  
The very sound of my household name!

And so I walked on my lonely way,  
I did not seek for an idol new:  
But ivy grows when the wall is grey,  
We smell the rose that is withered away;  
From the faded love sprang a love for you!

You smiled upon me—your eye was bright,  
Your cheek was ruddy, and smooth your brow,  
You cast a sunbeam across my night,  
But ever darkening before my sight  
I saw our parting—this parting now!

So say good-bye, for our paths are twain,  
And let us part while we can in love,  
The old can never be young again,  
The young ones smile at the old man's pain,  
But there's neither old nor young above!

I. FYVIE.

## PEGGY OGLIVIE'S INHERITANCE.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "ROUND THE COURT," ETC.

## CHAPTER XXI.

YOUNG HALDANE AND AULD HALDANE.

**G**RASS winna grow at his heels," was a frequent saying among the workpeople, concerning their young master—"Young David," as he was more familiarly and affectionately termed by the old folks, who had known him as a lad about the works. The saying might have been applied on the present occasion, by way of metaphor, to the mental process by which he was arriving at certain conclusions. In the course of his ride home, he had settled, as far as he was concerned, the whole course and object of his future life. He gave no time for the growth of those after-thoughts which hinder most people, and lead them to turn aside in the midst of their slowly forming purposes. He was one of the few who know their own minds. He knew that he had seen the one woman whom he could love, and whose love he would care to win; but knowing this, and resolved to win her, if possible, he could possess his mind in patience. The resolute are seldom rash.

If Miss Oglivie had been rich, the heiress of all the lands of Oglivie, he would have resolved to win her all the same. It was not that he thought highly of himself; he never thought of estimating himself at all. By simple force of manhood, he felt that he had a right to win this woman, or any other woman on whom he had set his heart. If she chanced to be set upon a height above him, he must reach the

height, that was all; he would not drag her down from wealth and ease, though for himself he valued these so lightly. He would win them, and lay them at her feet. Nevertheless, he was glad that the woman of his choice should know the meaning of poverty and toil. It was all the more joy to win for her what he considered her rightful heritage; and then there would be no portion of his life to which she must needs be a stranger, as he feared there might be, such as their often is in the lives of men who have struggled up, and find no sympathy with their early trials in the hearts of those who are nearest and dearest to them in their later days.

David Haldane the younger had known poverty and dependence himself. He was but the grand-nephew of the old man, who had been separated from his relations during all the earlier portion of his successful career. His father had been carried off by the press-gang, and had died at sea while he was a mere infant, and the widow, with her little son and aged mother to support, had been fain to throw herself on the mercy of her husband's uncle. Old David Haldane had allowed his nephew's widow and child but a small stipend. He had no idea of removing them out of the condition in which he found them. Still, but for him the little household would have starved in the years of famine; and they had plenty in a humble way. Then he took the boy into his service and "had an eye upon him," as he said; and at length he took the mother to keep house for him, which she did till she died.





(Drawn by M E. EDWARDS.)

' Say good-bye here, for our paths are twain.'—p. 136.

Under his mother's care, David had received the excellent groundwork of education provided for children of Scotland at the parish school, and as he developed at the works a genius both for mechanics and chemistry, his uncle had sent him into Bleaktown to attend the classes for mathematics and natural philosophy.

According to his own ideas, the old man had not been niggardly toward his relations. He had not used his wealth to raise them into a higher station than that of honest working people. He had not done this for himself. He lived as plainly and dressed as plainly now that he was a large capitalist, the owner of extensive works, the master of some hundreds of workpeople, as ever he did when he carried all his worldly goods on his own square shoulders. Of all his wealth he consumed but a worker's share, sufficient for health and comfort, and no more. In the way in which his fortune had been made he spent it—namely, in extending "the works." The works were to him wife and children, and end and aim—at least, so it appeared to the outward observer. On himself he might grudge to spend; on the works, never. The newest and most expensive improvements in machinery and plant were at once procured. What the works returned to him he returned to them again, and the returns were not single-fold. He had not worked to live: he had lived to work, and seemed to hold his work higher and dearer than life.

Under these circumstances, it had come to pass that, at the age of twenty-eight, David Haldane the younger was not in possession of an independent income. Holding in all respects the place of a son towards his grand-uncle, like him, he belonged to "the works;" and hitherto he had not felt it irksome, that his best energies should be so devoted. Strange as it may seem, he had never before had a longing to lead a life of his own—at least, not since the school-boy days, when he had longed for peril and adventure, and had thoughts of running away to sea. He had inherited his grand-uncle's passion for work, as he had inherited the features of his face.

For the first time in his life a vision of home and wife—of life and a place in the generations, rose before young David Haldane; and he felt the desire for independence. Not that he was in reality a dependent. There was strong and delicate independence in the very fact of his serving his relative as he did, for a mere nominal salary, in the very prime of his strength and usefulness, yielding his whole energy and power to the insatiable works. Had not the old man supported his mother, and her mother, and himself too, and had he not a right to this return? At the same time, the young man knew his own pecuniary value, and that he had long since repaid all the money expenditure which his uncle's kindness had involved. As for the kindness itself, that could only be paid in kind. Now that the time had come when he thought it right to claim an independence, as far as money was concerned, for the sake of his future life, he was still as ready as ever

to devote to the service of his uncle much that money might not purchase. That very day he resolved to place himself on this new footing, by asking from his uncle a regular salary as manager, and the power of investing his future savings in the works.

In the chill autumn evening "old David Haldane" sat by a fire, in the well-worn, dingy parlour of the printwork house. Before him stood his tumbler, and the "ship's biscuit," on which he nightly exercised his still splendid teeth; and opposite sat young David, with his resolution on hand, but not knowing very well how to frame it—not to his uncle's taste, but to suit his own notions of delicacy in the matter.

They were very like each other, these two men, like enough to be taken for father and son. The old man had the advantage, in point of massiveness and strength; the young man was evidently of finer, and more sensitive temperament, and might prove less robust in the stress of life, though capable of higher things.

After a silence of some duration, no unusual thing in these evening tête-à-têtes, the young man spoke. "I think you have been satisfied with my management of late," he said, fixing his eyes on the old man's face, who was gazing into the fire with an expression which to his companion revealed neither his mind nor his mood.

The old man looked up sharply. "I don't think I ever found much fault, David, my man," he said; "but things are lookin' very well at present. What were ye goin' to say?" he went on, speaking with a broad country accent. He was too shrewd not to know that he had only had the preface as yet.

"Well, the truth is, I have something to say," replied the young man, dashing right into the heart of the difficult subject. "The works can well afford to pay a manager, and if I manage well, I want to have the pay—that's about it. I don't forget what I owe you on my mother's account and my own," he added, seeing a somewhat hard smile on his uncle's face; "but that is not a debt which can be paid with money. I want to make my own life. Give me whatever is fair to live upon."

"And what might you consider fair?" broke in the old man, looking keenly at his grand-nephew.

"What you would have to give any other man in my place," was the prompt and straightforward reply.

"Then you don't mean to live here any longer?" said the old man, interrogatively.

"I hadn't thought of that: of course, you must make a deduction for my expenses here."

"What's the odds, man?" said old David: "it'll a' be yours when I'm gone." It was the first time he had ever made the least allusion to the disposal of his property.

"But I don't want you gone, and I do want the money—what money I can make—that is, I may want it." He hesitated a little, and then added, abruptly, "I may marry."

"Better leave that alone," said the old man. "But who may the lass be that's taken your fancy?"

"nobody here about, I reckon." He had jumped to the conclusion that his nephew's heart had been ensnared by some beauty of Bleaktown, the daughter, doubtless, of one of the manufacturers whom he went there to meet on business. He seemed to expect an answer to his question.

"I'll tell you that when I get her," laughed the young man.

"Settle first about the lass, and I'll settle about the siller," rejoined old Haldane, warily. He acknowledged the fairness of his nephew's request, but he was fond of power, and could not bring himself to accede to it at once.

But the young man shook his head. "No, no, uncle," he replied, "I must be sure of what I have to offer. But I don't want you to settle it to-night. Think it over, and let me know your mind some day soon. I'm off to my den now, to finish an experiment I'm trying with the new blue." And David Haldane the younger rose, and taking a key from the nail on which it hung by the fireplace, nodded in a friendly and yet half-restrained manner to the elder David, and left the room.

They were both men of strong will, these Haldanes, and a collision between them would be difficult to adjust—nay, if it came to that, would most likely be found incapable of any adjustment whatever, save that of each going his own way in opposite directions. The elder man had perhaps the stronger will of the two—that is, the least likely to be moved by reason, the least liable to influence. He would have his own way at any cost, even at the cost of his own comfort and peace, even at the cost, when it went beyond a certain point, of grievous wrong: for a strong will is not in itself a noble quality, as many seem to think; it is as often, indeed, a source of weakness as of strength.

Left alone in the dingy parlour, old Haldane put out the candles, and sat looking into the fire. His thoughts had been turned out of their ordinary channel, and, from speculations on his nephew's future, they reverted to his own past. There was a time when he had not worked only for work's sake, when a vision of home, and wife, and little ones had kept him warm on many a wintry tramp. There was a time when, as he neared the end of every succeeding round, the vision became warmer, and closer, and brighter as he rested in the little farmhouse, with a fuller purse and a lighter heart, under the same roof with his promised wife, and the day drew near when he was to give up his wandering life, and settle down with her as a respectable shop-keeper. The old man's brow darkened, and his eyes flashed fiercely in the firelight, as memory retraced, in characters far more vivid than any in which succeeding events appeared, the vanishing of that vision.

He had left Bleaktown with a heavy pack on his shoulders, but a light heart in his breast, on his last round of travel, when, a few miles beyond the town, he had encountered the two Oglivies, riding with a noisy band of boon companions. In a frolic they

had stopped him—they knew him well—and insisted on buying his whole stock, pack and all. After some debate with himself, as to whether he should go on to the little farmhouse, a few miles further in the direction which the riders had taken, he turned and hastened back to town.

In the pack which he had just parted with there was a pretty silken kerchief, intended for his sweetheart, which he had taken out and reserved at the sale. This act of reservation had been noticed by Gilbert Oglvie, who insisted on examining the article, and declared that he wanted it for a sweetheart of his own. After some parley, he had parted with it, and the first thing he did on his return to town was to go and buy another exactly similar. Some other arrangements made concerning his future business, he had taken the road again, and hastened to the home of his betrothed. He entered the house, and there, in the clean kitchen, in her afternoon dress, was his Jeanie sitting down to her wheel with the kerchief he had just parted with, and the neighbour of which he carried in his pocket, folded modestly over her bosom. Her mother sat knitting in her accustomed seat; but David Haldane's whole world had changed. He sat glaring at the token of treachery on his sweetheart's neck, for he did not doubt that it was the gift of gay Gilbert Oglvie.

"Has ony ill come ower ye, David?" the mother had asked, in alarm, and he had made no answer, but had risen and beckoned the girl to follow him. Bright, saucy, buxom Jean followed him into the little garden, with temper already roused by her lover's looks—for what could there be to look black about when she was by?—and he had sternly demanded how she came by the kerchief. But Jean indignantly refused to satisfy him.

He had left her standing there in pride and anger, and gone into the house, and made the same demand upon the mother, and the old woman had answered, simply—"She got it frae yoursell." Then David Haldane had left the house never to return. And there and then had ended the one love of his life.

"I vowed to be upsides with him," muttered the old man, looking into the fire which threw a lurid gleam over his face. "I swore David Haldane would be laird o' the lands o' Oglvie, and there's a David Haldane that will! But for him! I would like to turn him oot alive! It's little triumph to triumph over the dead, and we're near of an age, we're near of an age!"

## CHAPTER XXII.

### BREAKING UP.

ON that same evening, Peggy and her grandfather sat together by the firelight. The old man was in his wonted attitude, slightly bending in his chair towards the pleasant glow. Peggy sat on a low stool on the opposite side of the hearth, her chin resting on her hand. She was wearied out, and, feeling the kind of sadness that comes with bodily weariness, she was glad of the healing, restful dark-

ness, and had not lit the candles, but had suffered it to gather round them in the silence.

"Where's Jean?" said the old man, suddenly.

Peggy had waited upon him all day, and he had not noticed the old woman's absence until now.

"She's not very well to-day, grandfather," said Peggy; "but she thinks she'll be better to-morrow. If she's no better, may I send for the doctor?"

"She may do about that as she likes, as about everything else," he answered, in a tone of unusual energy, which startled Peggy.

"Do you want anything? shall I bring the lights?" she asked.

"No, no," he answered; "there's light enough to light me on the road I'm going."

His sunken eyes flashed in the firelight under his shaggy brows, and Peggy fancied that his face had a strangely livid look. She came and sat down by his knees on the hearth, and clasped them as she used to do when a child.

"Are you ill, grandfather?" she asked.

"Breaking up," he answered, quickly, and more gently—"fast breaking up."

"What can I do?" she said, clinging to him with a subdued sob.

"Nothing, little one," he answered. "What can you do, when the tide is coming up, to keep it from covering the sunken wreck? I feel the waves about my feet."

Sitting at his feet, she trembled, as her cheek touched the chill hand. With all her warm young life she clung to him.

"Let me send for the doctor," she pleaded.

"I might have done better to send for him long ago," he answered, with a faint flash of grim humour. "I might not have burdened the world so long. There's one thing you must promise me, little one," he added: "Whatever you do about this wretched hulk of a body, don't bring any one here to doctor my soul; let me go my way without a stranger standing by my bed, speaking sacred words into senseless ears."

He alluded to the universal custom of having the minister at every deathbed. She was silent, and he repeated, "You will mind that, little one—no minister."

"Grandfather," she said, lifting her face from his knees, "let me be your minister—any one can be a minister. Let me read to you."

"Do," he answered, dreamily.

"I can see by this light," she said, rising.

She brought a book, her New Testament, stirred the fire, and sat down again at his feet, but seemed at a loss what to read. But he helped her in this.

"There is one chapter I remember better than any other," he said. "It was my mother's favourite chapter, and I learnt it, verse by verse, at her knee. Read that, little one."

He named the parable of the prodigal son, and Peggy found the chapter, and read without interruption to the end.

When it was finished, there was an interval of silence, which was broken, at length, by a sigh from

the old man, so heavy as to be almost a groan. Then he murmured, "Ah! but he was young—the prodigal was not an old man, little one. If a man feeds long enough with the swine, he becomes as one of them; he has neither the will nor the power to arise."

"But if he had the power given to him, his being old would make no difference. Do you think it could to God, grandfather?"

"You are nearer him than I am, little one. It is not so many years yet since you came from him, and I have wandered long and far."

"But you are drawing nearer him again," she answered, "and so we are both alike, perhaps."

Another pause, and again the old man broke the silence.

"I feel more myself to-night," he said, "than I have done for years. If there was only time, I would settle some things to-night."

"There will be time to-morrow," Peggy answered. "And there is a great deal I want to tell you, grandfather," she said, her thoughts suddenly reverting to Captain Oglivie.

"Yes, yes, to-morrow," he repeated; "there will be time to-morrow."

He seemed afraid of breaking the spell of peace which seemed to have fallen on his spirit.

"Everything seems different to-night. For years and years I have borne in sullen silence. I thought it brave, little one, when smitten of God and afflicted, to bear it thus, as I thought it brave to blaspheme. A coward's trick, I called it, to cry to God in time of trouble, when I had never called on him before; and to-night it seems such mad, rebellious folly. It is all so different if God is indeed a Father."

The last words were spoken as if to himself, and again there fell a stillness on the room. There is other joy on earth than that of youthful pleasure, or of satisfied affection—joy akin to that which there may be among the angels of God; and some such joy visited and strengthened the inmates of that silent chamber, as the moments glided past.

It was time to part for the night. Poor Tammas came at the accustomed hour, and with many a suppressed groan wheeled his master off to bed. Then Peggy went down into the kitchen and prepared a dish of gruel, which she carried into the little room beyond in which Jean and Tammas slept, and administered to the faithful old servant who lay there, suffering still more from the impatience with which she endured her ailment, than from the ailment itself. The truth was, both she and her young mistress had frightened themselves into the belief that the feverish cold which had attacked her, was the dreaded fever, through which she had nursed the Highland woman and her husband.

Soon all the house was silent, and Peggy sat dreaming in the firelight, till her little world was a paradise of forgiveness, and hope, and love; then, somehow, the waking dream, in which Captain Oglivie was standing behind her grandfather's chair, and wheeling him about in a garden flushed with roses,



while she walked by his side, melted away into unremembered visions. She had fallen asleep.

It was quite dark when she awoke, feeling very stiff and cold. She rose to steal to her room in the dark, for the fire had gone out, and it was no easy matter to procure a light in those days. As she passed her grandfather's room with noiseless steps, she heard, or thought she heard, a groan. She stood still and listened, and the sound was repeated. Then she gently opened the door. He was breathing strangely, and yet not as if asleep. She spoke to him, but there was no answer, and, her heart palpitating with sudden fear, she descended quickly to the kitchen to procure a light.

Tammas and Jean were asleep in the little room beyond, and she was unwilling to disturb them. The kitchen fire, carefully covered up so as to keep alive throughout the night, speedily gave her the light she sought. But soft as her movements had been, they had roused the pair of sleepers, and, stimulated by a whisper from his wife, Tammas called out, "Who's there?" in a tone of valorous defiance.

Peggy went to their half-open door and answered, softly, "It's only me. I've not been in bed yet, and I think there's something the matter with grandfather."

At these words, Jean seemed to fling off the illness of the day before, and, wrapped in her plaid, she was soon standing beside Peggy at her master's bed.

As for him, he seemed to sleep a strange, uneasy sleep, in which he laboured for breath. It was in vain that they tried to rouse him out of it. Then mistress and servant looked into each other's face, and each read the confirmation of the fear that this was no sleep, but the dark passage into that slumber from which there is no waking.

Jean wrung her hands in mute despair, and sat down on the foot of her master's bed, evidently to await the end. Not so her young mistress. "Stay here," she whispered, "and I will go for the doctor."

"At this time o' nicht, and pitch dark," murmured the old woman. "Na, na, Tammas 'ill gang, bad as he is at the gait."

"I'll go in half the time," said Peggy, in a low, firm voice; and with a lingering look at the insensible form on the bed, knowing that even the remnant of life with which it stirred might be gone before her return, she hastened from the room.

She found poor Tammas reduced, between pain and fear, to something like total imbecility, crouching over the kitchen fire, which, he had stirred into a blaze. But he got the lantern and lighted it for her, and, wrapped in her cloak and hood, she stepped out with it into the darkness.

How very dark it was! a darkness that might be felt. Her lantern just served to show her the path. It glanced on the bole of a tree, now and then, as she took her way through the wood; but beyond rose walls of darkness on either hand, and a canopy of darkness stretched above her head. The night was moonless, starless, windless. Worse than the lack of light, Peggy felt the dead calm—the utter breathlessness. It was like the cessation of universal life. She reached the foot of the hill, where there was a little thicket of hazel and briar. Something patted her on the cheek; it was a light branch which she had brushed against. A spray of bramble caught her. It felt like the clasp of invisible arms stretched out to detain her. It needed a high heart to stand still and disengage herself from the clasp. But she passed on swiftly, over the fields and through the sleeping village, till she came to the doctor's house. It was all dark too.

Peggy had knocked rather timidly, and had not succeeded in rousing the servant, but had only roused the more lightly-sleeping master, who, after a short interval, threw open his bedroom window and thrust out his head arrayed in his night-cap, only it was too dark to see it. In answer to his question, she speedily satisfied him as to the urgency of her mission.

At length the little doctor came down, having packed himself into his clothes, but having forgotten to remove the night-cap, which nodded approvingly at Peggy.

"And you came here all alone in the dark," he said, in astonishment, as he gave her admittance. Then, with sundry ejaculations, he thrust her and her lantern into his study, and hastened to rouse his domestic helps.

It seemed a long time to Peggy before the doctor's gig was ready; but at last he came and led her out and placed her in it, and taking some things that might, he said, be useful, from various shelves in the study, took his place by her side and drove away in the darkness in the direction of Delaube.

(To be continued.)

## BELLE.



IT was Sunday morning. The cows lay asleep in the meadows, the sweet Sunday bells rang short sermons on the air, and the villagers were wending their way to church. There was the father, a little constrained in his Sunday clothes, but still proud of the change they made in his appearance; there was the mother, matronly and fair, but rather worried by the attempt to convey her flock safely to church; there was Fanny, with her cottage bonnet trimmed

up afresh, and gay with new ribbons, casting side-glances at the young farmers, out of eyes that, when looked at by her mother, were modestly downcast and completely demure. Tommy and the children were lagging behind, and only little Belle was absent from the procession. Belle had strayed. Naughty little Belle did not much care about church. She was not good like mother, to sit so still, and listen so long; so Belle had strayed out into the cool green fields. There were hot blazes of light, on the dusty

highway, but under the hill, and in every dell, were cool patches of shade, and in one of these latter little Belle now sat, in a half-sitting, half-lying posture, opening and clenching her little hand, in an attempt to capture a large showy butterfly, whose bright-coloured wings were now just within her grasp, and again yards away in the blue calm before her. She was a pretty little girl, and deserves a description; but then Belle deserved so many things she did not get, and this, I am afraid, must be one.

When I say "Belle," there starts up before me a child's simple figure, a round little face, red gold hair, like the fashionable chignons, sweet sensitive lips, that were too much given to quivering, and eyes—Belle's eyes were as blue as convolvuluses and about as pretty. Strangers, seeing her for the first time, launched forth into fuller descriptions; but this, as I have said, I will not attempt. Stretching now after the butterfly, which was high above her head, describing gay circles in the air, Belle wheeled suddenly round, and came face to face with a stranger, a young clergyman, who was also half sitting, half lying on the grass, with the back of his neck against a tree, and with a book in his hand, which he was reading intently, quite unaware of the butterfly and Belle.

But if he had been a flash of lightning he could not have transfixed Belle more completely to the spot. She let the butterfly go, though as usual he seemed on the very verge of imprisonment, and stood staring, not so much at the man, as at the white "choker," the insignia of his office, which adorned his neck.

Here was Nemesis in the most horrible form, overtaking her actions—a clergyman, who would doubtless take her with him, in his hand, and would suggest, perhaps insist on, summary punishment for this wilful little breaker of the first long commandment.

Then there would be of course no help for Belle. Her mother was always "guided by her betters," and unknown horrors would then fall on her head. "Why," thought Belle, severely, "was that clergyman, too, not at church?"

There was sufficient answer to this in the young man's wasted frame, and the spots of hectic colour on his cheeks; the fatigue would very certainly have been too much for him.

But Belle saw nothing of all this, as indeed it was not to be expected that she should. She thought the "gentleman" simply exempt from all unpleasant duties, on the ground of being one of those fortunate "grown-ups," and as for health—why the colour on his cheek was beautiful to behold, like her little schoolfellow Anna's doll, which did, indeed, rejoice in somewhat unusual bloom.

All these thoughts flickered through Belle's little brain as she stood before him in fear and trembling, longing, yet afraid, to run away. For how could she hope to convey those little pattering feet of hers noiselessly through the rustling long grass that grew thick on the road to liberty? That clearly was out of Belle's power. So she stood where she was, a sad-faced little culprit, waiting before a most unconscious judge.

How long the time seemed to Belle before the young clergyman raised his eyes from the fluttering pages of that book to the little child's face before him, working so unpleasantly with convictions of guilt. At length, however, the dreaded moment arrived. The book went down, the gentleman's eyelashes up. Belle's cheeks flamed into warm beauty, and the foolish little lips set to and quivered.

Altogether, she assisted the very idea she was most anxious not to convey—or she would have done so to any unoccupied mind; but the clergyman, coming straight from the sweet words of the Psalmist, saw in her no truant, and did not even perceive the trouble on her face. All he thought was, "Why, here is a pretty little girl; now, if my poor Kate had but lived, I too might have—" and he smiled at her, this inconsiderate judge.

Belle dropped him a little curtsey, and her heart beat just one shade less quickly.

The young man put out his hand to her, and kissed the fair open brow still shining from mother's yellow soap, and little Belle stood, his arm round her waist, with all her calculations completely at fault.

What would he say to her—this gentleman who caressed little girls when they should have been at church?

He said nothing, nothing at all, only held her, looking at her closely, as if trying how it would have felt to have had anything so bonny belonging to him—his very own. But if this were amusement, it was so only on one side.

Belle had now partially recovered from her fright, and was sending impatient thoughts after the butterfly, and her feet were positively longing to take a run upon the grass out among the kingcups; but the clergyman, attracted by some vivacious little movement on the part of his prisoner, began to address her, and Belle recognised flight as impossible.

"Stay and talk to me," he said; "we have all the field to ourselves you see."

Belle did not see anything of the kind. Was there not the frisky brown pony—that pony that was at once the admiration and dread of Belle's life—kicking up his heels behind him, gayer and more frisky even than usual? Were there not birds of every form and note concealed in the hedges, high up in the trees, pouring forth their version of melody upon the silent air? Had not the butterfly returned from his travels, and was he not even now, in company with a gayer, gaudier, showier specimen of his tribe, beating bright-coloured wings almost in Belle's little face. And there were insects Belle knew all over the grass, purple moths, and—but then the clergyman was certainly not thinking of purple moths.

"And what is your name, little girl?"

Here again, Miss Belle's thoughts criticised, this was so like a stupid "grown-up."

Belle could not remember to have ever met one who did not ask her what was her name; an act of attention Belle did not at all appreciate; indeed, she thought it rather unpleasantly inquisitive than

otherwise, and was, perhaps, proud of not sharing in the weakness, for she certainly was not curious as to the clergyman's appellation. However, she made him another little bob after the fashion of village children, and gave in her name with all due gravity.

"If you please, sir, Belle."

"Belle? How very pretty! Your mother must be a sensible woman to have given her child such a pretty name. It must be good to go through the world with a name like Belle."

All of which was of course quite beyond the comprehension of his audience. What did Belle know about going through the world—Belle, whose only aim now was to get out of his grasp into the freer air beyond?

"And where is mother, Belle?"

The clergyman said this in all innocence, with no thoughts of applying the answer, and absently withal, for his brain was busy with holy conjectures, and far enough away from the child's misdeeds.

But poor little Belle did not know this, and her heart beat fast under the blue cotton frock that mother had made last week, and which was, indeed, her very best and grandest attire.

"Mother is at church," she said, "and father, and Fan; so's Tommy, and the little uns."

Poor Belle, she had brought it on herself.

After such a speech, how could the clergyman, preoccupied as he was, fail to say—

"And why are you not at church too, little Belle?"

It was over now, and Belle had all the courage of desperation.

"Please, sir, I didn't want," she said.

This, we will suppose, by way of making things better. But now the clergyman was quite awake to the situation, and properly grave.

"Oh, really, and why did you not?" he asked.

She had no resource left but the child's one, dating far back. Large tears gathered in Belle's blue eyes—convulsives filled with dew—and then overflowed, rolling slowly down her fair cheeks, and splashing heavily on her fat, dimpled hands. Belle had on no pinafore, and she did not dare convert her new frock into a mop, so she stood there the picture of embarrassment and distress.

It was not in nature not to pity her, and Belle had an arm round her, and a fine white handkerchief soaking up her tears, before she knew where she was. The "gentleman," it must be remembered, was very young, and was, in his way perhaps, as soft-hearted as Belle herself.

"Why, how silly! What a foolish little maid! Look here, Belle, if you cry like that you will make me unhappy."

Sobs fainter, at the same time distinct.

"Because I am sure you are sorry, Belle—you will have vexed mother, you know—but you can't be more than sorry."

"Did you ever," said Belle, "do anything so wrong?"

Did he ever, arrived as he was at man's estate, do

anything as wrong as this child! He hardly dared to look at her, this guileless little child, the greatest fault of whose life was the purest innocence beside his sins, good man though, indeed, he was justly accounted to be.

"Did you?" said little Belle, all her soul in her eyes, and waiting as if her chances of improvement depended on his words.

"Many things, Belle, though not perhaps this one. I am only too sorry to be kept away from church."

"What keeps you?" asked Belle, and there was a slight touch of scorn in her voice.

She did not believe there need anything have kept him. He liked better, she supposed, sitting in the bright sunshine to keeping bolt upright in those highbacked pews.

"I am too ill, Belle. It tires me too much."

But little Belle still looked incredulous. She too might have laid claim to illness, she thought, if fatigue were the outward signs.

"What is the matter with you?" she asked.

"I am dying, Belle; but you, I suppose, know nothing of that."

"Yes, I do," retorted Belle, who was always insulted by ignorance on any point being imputed to her, "because I had a little sister once that died. Are you glad you're going to be dead?" said Belle, going on quickly, and carefully avoiding whatever grammar came in her way. "I shouldn't."

"You shouldn't?"

"No," said Belle, decisively. "When baby died mother had her put in the ground, and I shouldn't like, if I was baby, to be all alone there at night."

"Your little sister is not really there, you know; she is up in heaven, one of God's little angels."

Belle looked up at the blue sky, dotted all over with little fleecy white clouds.

"You would like that?"

"Better," said Belle, "but not and leave mother, and father, and Tommy, and Fan—oh, and not and leave the little uns."

The little ones! In the name of all the impossibilities, how many younger could there be than Belle?

"Not unless God wanted you to; then, he would take you first up into his beautiful heaven, and give you wings, and make you into a little angel, and give you back your little sister; and your father, and mother, and Tommy, and Fan would all follow, and would be so glad to find you there when they went."

"And the little uns?" inquired Belle, anxiously.

"And the little ones, certainly. Will you not try to be good, that you may go up there, when you die?"

"And when do you think you shall be dead?" asked Belle, who preferred to look at the subject from his point of view, rather than her own. She was too young to feel awe, and put the question in perfect good faith.

The clergyman smiled rather sadly. "When shall I be dead?" he said. "Well, Belle, if you come and play here in the fields this time next year—

not on a Sunday, Belle—you will be a good little girl then, and will always go to church on a Sunday—this time next year, Belle, I think I shall be—dead."

Belle looked interested, and would have liked, I think, to have heard more; but her newly-found friend was no longer aware of her presence, and had drifted with his own words long past her.

"I shall be—dead!"

Should he indeed be dead—all the doctors had told him so—this time next year, when Belle, just one shade prettier, just one shade less of a baby, would be, perhaps, sitting threading daisies, in this very field, where now she was sitting, looking up in his eyes, her own wistful and large with thought? Suddenly all the bells broke out—four strokes, then the hour. Service in the churches was over.

"I must go," said little Belle, as there began to be forms visible in the distance. "Mother 'ull want me to help mind the baby, while Fan lays the cloth. Good-bye, sir."

"Good-bye, Belle. You will think of what I have said, and try to be a good little maid, that when your time, too, comes to die, God may take you with him into his holy heaven, as he did your little sister; then you will not be afraid, any more than I am now."

"But I am never ill," said little Belle, and so put up her mouth to be kissed, and left him.

He watched the last flutter of her blue cotton frock, catching in the hedges, simple and pretty in the sunshine, and felt that for him, at least on earth, he should never again see Belle.

Summer faded, the brown leaves of autumn dropped on the ground, winter cold froze up the ponds, spring succeeded, and summer again came round.

The young clergyman had spent the year abroad, in warm summer climates, and the hotter sunshine had been good for his complaint; there was now even hope given him of his life. He who had been so long preparing to depart, must now stay in the world, and work yet another hour in the vineyard.

And so it had happened, the chances of time had brought him again to the little primitive village in which he had last seen Belle. Passing through it, and meeting a woman who had known him when he had last been there, he made close inquiries touching the child, whose sweet face and unawakened heart had made so deep an impression on him. He had, been often thinking of her, and had longed that it might so have pleased God that the words he had said might indeed have been to Belle like the bread that is cast on the waters, and the seed that, when sown in faith, bringeth forth sometimes a hundred-fold.

"Belle, sir?" said the woman, putting up her apron to her eyes—for she was of that class whose tears fall easily—"we aint got no Belle now, sir; she's been under the ground now hard on a month."

Under the ground, along with the little sister,

whom Belle thought must have been afraid to have been left there at night! Under the ground! Belle, with her blue eyes closed, as convulsives close for the night, with her red lips, red no longer, with her sweet voice hushed, and her pattering little feet still for ever! Under the ground! Belle, who, she had told him, was never ill,—under the ground! dead before the clergyman who was to have been dead this year!

"There aint none of us too young, is there sir?" said the woman, when she found that the young man was too shocked to speak. "And she was such a sweet child, was Belle! She used often to speak of you, sir, and how you was soon going to be dead—excuse me, sir, and lor, who'd ha' thought it 'ud been she to go first?"

"Did she seem afraid to die? Did she know she was dying? How was it?"

"Well, sir, the early part of this spring—this last spring as ever was—there was scarlet fever about in the village, and there was a many took it, and had it bad, but there didn't none have it so bad as Belle, and there wasn't none, sir, as took it so quiet."

"She had been always a goodish child, but when she took the fever, she seemed all of a sudden to become more like an angel than a child, she was that sweet and gentle. And she'd lay there, and talk of them angels, how they were coming with their white wings, to take her up, and she, poor child, with her pretty lips all red with the fever, and her little hand so hot. Are you going, sir? Would you like as I should show you the way to church? They've put Belle in along with her sister, her as she was always talking about, and the clergyman's daughter have put up a stone to her, for the gentry all round loved Belle."

So talking, the woman led the way to the little corner of the country churchyard where poor Belle now lay. Then the young clergyman signifying his will, she left him there, standing alone.

The graves all around it were green, and were pretty enough beds for any tired form, and little Belle's was bright with flowers. There were fuchsias, and crimson and scarlet roses, and some blue flowers that recalled to him her eyes. Though, indeed, he required no outward help to set the little picture before him. In his own mind there was always Belle sitting in the field by the hill, with a shaggy brown pony in the background, and no end of blue butterflies in the air. And now, though her cotton frock would still be as good as new, its childish little owner was lying at his feet, cold and dead.

Then he turned his eyes on her grave, and the simple superscription upon the stone, which the clergyman's good daughter had erected to the little village favourite, that was never again to be known in the village.

The only thing written there was—

BELLE,

and underneath some sacred words added:—

"Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God."